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INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0878
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN 1447
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON 1932
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 2399
RUEHBH/AMEMBASSY NASSAU 2629
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN 1585
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 0712
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO 0305
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0229
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC 0324
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PORT AU PRINCE 000031

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR
DRL
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SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
TREASURY FOR JEFFREY LEVINE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [PKAO](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI ELECTIONS: MINUSTAH LOGISTICS IN PLACE,
POLITICAL DECISIONS REMAIN

Classified By: DCM Douglas M. Griffiths, reasons 1.4 b and d

¶1. (C) Summary: The MINUSTAH head of elections operations and logistics reported that MINUSTAH will be prepared logistically to administer elections, but that Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) must take some policy decisions to avoid additional delays. MINUSTAH is ready to begin training poll workers, but some regional (BED/BEC) officials are refusing to contact workers identified by authorities in Port-au-Prince because they have been left out of the selection process. Civic education and Communal Electoral Bureau (BEC) staff have also threatened to disrupt elections preparations because they have received only partial salaries or no salaries at all. The CEP and interim government continue to debate the feasibility of locating voting centers in the still volatile Port-au-Prince neighborhood of Cite Soleil; some believe that the centers should be moved to areas surrounding Cite Soleil. Finally, some political parties are calling for the CEP to increase the number of voting centers throughout the countryside. To do so would delay elections preparations indefinitely, however, and the Core Group and the IGOH must lend their full support to maintaining the current plan for voting centers. End Summary.

MINUSTAH Operationally Ready

¶2. (SBU) The head of the Joint Operations Center responsible for elections operations, Colonel MacLeod (Canadian) and Chief of MINUSTAH electoral operations Mike Collins (Canadian) met Poloffs January 4 to discuss elections preparations and potential pitfalls. Despite significant initial shortcomings, MacLeod said MINUSTAH's operational preparations are on track. He felt the best date for an election would be February 7, because the OAS should be able to get out 75 to 80 percent of the ID cards by January 22. According to MacLeod, MINUSTAH needs approximately two weeks to integrate the OAS card distribution personnel into its

operation and train them for Election Day.

CEP Regional Offices Rejecting Poll Worker Selections

13. (SBU) MacLeod said that MINUSTAH and the CEP have trained election day supervisors, but they have been unable to begin training for poll workers. The BEC and BED presidents are reportedly refusing to contact workers identified by CEP personnel because their personal choices for the positions are not included.

Salary Issues

14. (SBU) CEP-contracted civic education workers protested in front of the CEP January 2, threatening violence unless they were paid. According to MacLeod, UNDP opposes paying these workers because the CEP hired 4,500 workers rather than the 2,500 called for the CEP-endorsed budget. Further, the workers did not appear to have kept records of their activities, and he assumed that many had done no work at all.

MacLeod said he and CEP Director General Jacques Bernard take the threat of violence seriously, and have recommended that the UNDP pay the workers to diffuse the situation and demand that workers begin to document their hours worked. UNDP has not, however, accepted this recommendation and does not intend to make payment.

15. (SBU) Additionally, some BEC workers have threatened to impede elections because they have not been paid full salaries. The disagreement arose after the CEP approved a 50

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percent pay raise to BEC workers over UNDP objections. Though the CEP covered some of the salary increase, the UNDP did not agree to pay the remainder, and workers received less than expected as a result.

Voting Centers in Cite Soleil Under Debate

16. (C) MacLeod reported that the PM and others in the IGOH and CEP are considering eliminating voting centers in Cite Soleil for security reasons. MacLeod disapproved of the idea, noting that MINUSTAH would need to ensure security for the voters of Cite Soleil in any case, whether voting in their own neighborhood or walking to a center on the outskirts of the slum. MacLeod speculated that the gangs had cooperated with the registration drive only because they wanted people to have ID cards, which will be required for many transactions such as money transfers. Now, he guessed, the gangs would attempt to derail elections. According to MINUSTAH elections official Martin Landi, the BEC president in Cite Soleil has already begun to politicize voting in Cite Soleil by attempting to change the location of voting sites and load the list of poll workers with political cronies.

Number and Location of Voting Centers

17. (SBU) A number of political parties have threatened to boycott the elections unless the CEP relocates some of the voting centers and increases their number. Parties have demanded more voting centers in rural some areas and the relocation of voting centers closer to population centers. Parties also complain that many voters have been incorrectly assigned to voting centers outside of their area of residence, thus affecting their ability to vote for deputy and local candidates. MacLeod suggested that moving some voting centers would be relatively easy, and would only involve reassigning a relatively small number of voters. However, moving larger numbers of voters from one deputy district to an entirely different one would force MINUSTAH to print, sort, and distribute extra ballots. CEP Director

General Jacques Bernard has said he plans to yield to the party demands that will be easy to accomplish, and sort out district assignment errors without necessitating additional printing, if possible. He has given his staff until January 20 to finalize all of the voter assignments.

18. (C) Comment: The issues detailed above can be quickly resolved, and we will push the CEP and MINUSTAH leadership to take quick actions to do so. The controversy surrounding the location and numbers of voting centers is sensitive, however, and we will take additional steps to ensure that the IGOH and the Core Group stand behind the CEP and MINUSTAH in maintaining the current number of voting centers. Any large-scale effort to revisit the number and location of voting centers would derail the distribution of voting lists and ballots and indefinitely delay elections preparations. Haitian authorities have traditionally organized thousands of voting centers throughout the countryside that were convenient to Haitians living in even the remotest areas. At the same time, however, this far-flung network of loosely supervised voting centers allowed for instances of fraud and manipulation of the process. Bearing in mind the resource limitations, MINUSTAH and the CEP have made reasonable compromises in limiting the number of voting centers. The parties must be made to understand that mistakes will be fixed where possible, but that in order to ensure a timely transfer of power, elections must proceed with a more limited number of voting centers that ensures the integrity of the process. If some Haitians must travel a bit further than in previous elections in order to cast their ballots, then all

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actors should come together in encouraging Haitians to make this effort and participate in the process. End Comment.

CARNEY